

**EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is required in order to make an examiner's amendment which places this application in condition for allowance. During a telephone conversation conducted on 11/05/2009, Mr. Richard Krinsky requested an extension of time for 1 MONTH(S) and authorized the Director to charge Deposit Account No. 02-1010 (41034/44881) the required fee of \$130 for this extension and authorized the following examiner's amendment. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

in claim 1, line 13, the phrase "essentially without a gap" has been amended to read --without a gap--;

in claim 7, line 2, the phrase "single-turn disk-like lamella ring" has been amended to read --single-turn lamella ring--;

in claim 8, line 2, the phrase "single turn disk-like lamella ring includes at least a pair of disk-like lamella rings" has been amended to read --single-turn lamella ring includes at least a pair of lamella rings--.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

the claims have been found to be allowable over the prior art of record because the prior art neither teaches nor suggests the combination of the features in claim 1, more specifically, the combination of the first and second components as described with a flat gasket contacting the facing flange surfaces of the components and further including at least one lamella ring located in an annular groove upstream of the flat gasket and biased against the working diameter.

The closest prior art of record, Glover et al (US 5,197,766; hereinafter Glover) the embodiment shown in figure 7, is similar to Applicant's claimed invention, however, Glover neither teaches nor suggests a flat gasket or a lamella ring. Further, there is no motivation absent Applicant's own disclosure to replace the o-rings in Glover with a lamella ring.

While the swivel joint in Williams et al (US 4,478,439) includes laminated seal discs (41) in combination with an o-ring (48), the discs are used in a materially different manner, i.e., for accommodating rotary movement of member (11) (column 3 line 45), and as such are not biased against the working diameter without a gap.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gwendolyn Fournet whose telephone number is (571)270-5740. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30a-6:00p.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571)272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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